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and

How It Was Saved

The PROFILE
and How It Was Saved

A brief story giving the facts about The Profile in the Franconia Notch in New Hampshire

By Rev. GUY ROBERTS

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By Rev. Guy Roberts

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Age of The Profile

The concensus of geological opinion as to when the Franconia Mountains were brought into practically their present form of existence, places it at about the end of the glacial period. The great North American ice-sheet covered the Franconia Mountains as it did all others in New England, and has left distinct record of its passage over their summits.

The far-famed Profile on Mount Cannon is supposed to have been brought forth partly as the result of the melting and slipping away action of the ice-sheet, and partly by the action of the frost and ice in crevices, forcing off, and moving about certain rocks and ledges into profile forming positions. It is fair to suppose that the exact profile of "The Old Man of the Mountain" was completed during the latter part of the post-glacial period, from 2000 to 10,000 years ago. Perhaps it would be safe to "split the difference" and call it 6000 years ago, which would put his birth back to near the time when

"Adam delved and Eve spun."

Anyway, like all mortals made of dust, he had a Creator, and in view of the paucity of properly attested genealogical history, this tracing of his family tree is not unreasonable.

Discovery of The Profile

Although we have yet to hear of any traditions left by the American

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face " of " The Old Man of the Mountain." Here the matter was dropped and in the main forgotten.

The Rediscovery

Years come and go. A new generation is on the scene and still the Profile awaits its hastening doom.

One day the author, one of whose earliest recollections is of his mother telling him of seeing " The Old Man of the Mountain " when on her wedding trip many years before, stood for the first time to gaze spellbound upon this wonder. He went away, only to return again another year, and yet another. He read all he could find about the Profile. Being naturally of a curious turn of mind he began to wonder if the guidebook descriptions of the Profile were correct, for to him it did not seem so. A desire to make an investigation for himself took possession of him. But how? That was the question. How get there? How know that he had reached the correct spot, even when there, for naturally a profile would not be visible from the top of a head. Enquiries were made, but all to no avail. The top of the head was declared unknown, or inaccessible. But finally days came that afforded ample opportunity for an exhaustive study of the Profile from the road below with the aid of a powerful glass, with the result that a way was discovered to get there, and a way to know that one had arrived at the correct spot when once there. A little later this plan was carried out,

by Miss Cheldie Hickok of Meredith, N. H. — the great granddaughter of Mr Hall

Profile Location Development

Even though "The Notch" had not offered a natural passageway for a road from Woodstock and the south, to Franconia and the north, the Profile itself would eventually have drawn its countless visitors much as now — but the building of the highway and later the coming of the railroad, made the present splendid development at The Profile House and cottages a natural result of the Profile's attractiveness.

Seeing But Not Perceiving

And so, during the past century the multitudes have come, viewed with admiration "The Great Stone Face" as immortalized by Hawthorne, and have done their way in the dreaming that the face itself was in imminent danger of falling to pieces. These were satisfied to see it in its sublime grandeur as outlined against the southern sky, and to carry away a never-to-forget-ten picture of it, without going to the trouble of examining the profile-forming mass of ledge for what or whom it or information it might contain. As there is no fruit of any kind leading to the head, and as it is quite impossible for most visitors to locate the profile-forming ledge when coming down to them from the top of the Mountain, it is not strange that its exact status has been so long in unknown, especially so in view of the further fact that no guides are available to lead one to the exact location.

Along in 1880, the author of The White Hills — stated that, the Profile is formed by three separate and disjointed ledges of granite covering a lateral distance of two feet, to the one forms the chin, another the nose, and upper lip, and the third the forehead. In height, the Profile is 40 feet from the bottom of the chin to the top of the forehead. A distinct resemblance is also made in "The Home of Geology" — New Hampshire — "The supposedly outlined old man's face, so much copied in guide-books and other monuments, is formed by three ledges, and has attracted attention as far back as it is known about the Profile."

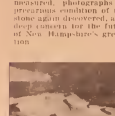
Later Investigations

Some 40 years ago certain men — the "Spouting Mountain Ledge Club located the profile forming ledges accurately, and in doing so discovered that one of the large masses — which forms the prominent part of the forehead — was in danger of falling off. The discovery was made up and printed in several publications at the time, and a further examination was made by the proprietor of The Profile House — accompanied by a Boston mason and a lady, who had the idea of measuring for the size of the rock, noth and could be done to "save the face" of "The Old Man of the Mountain" Here the matter was dropped and in the main forgotten

The Rediscovery

Years come and go. A new generation is on the scene and still the Profile awaits its hastening doom

One day the author, one of whose earliest recollections is of his mother telling him of seeing "The Old Man of the Mountain" when an her wedding trip many years before, found for the first time to gaze upon the wonder. He went away with his mind again another year, and yet another. He read all he could find about the Profile. Being afraid of a curious turn of mind he began to wonder if the guide-book description of the Profile were correct, for to him it did not seem so. A desire to make an investigation for himself took possession of him. But how? That was the question. How get there? Has lines that he had reached the correct spot, even when he by no naturalist a profile would not be visible from the top of a head. Enquiries were made, but all to no avail. The top of the head was deemed unknown or inaccessible. Finally days came that afforded ample opportunity for an exhaustive study of the Profile from the road below, with the aid of a powerful and investigation to convince the author that it is not there, and a way to get there, and a way to know if the Profile is still in the correct spot when once there. A little later this plan was carried out and on September 5, 1906, the top of the head was reached, its hight measured, photographs taken, the precarious condition of the forehead stone again discovered, and that with deep concern for the future security of New Hampshire's greatest attraction



AFTER DISCOVERY
Parts of the forehead stone, inclined to slide off

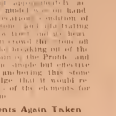
A little latter the matter was taken up with the proprietor of The Profile House, the former discovery and investigation to convince him of the facts, and to get them and a way to know if the Profile is still in the correct spot when once there. A little later this plan was carried out

Repeated Efforts

The writer was not satisfied to let the matter end here. To him it did seem as though the bigness of the slipping rock and its inscrutability were sufficient reasons for standing idle by and allow, what has been styled "The American Wonder of the World," to go to pieces. Gradually a method of fastening this rock in place formed in his mind which to him seemed perfectly feasible. But he was not a stone-man and naturally concluded that his opinion in the matter would not be especially weighty, so he planned to get a thoroughly competent surveyor upon the head to make an examination and pass judgment on the feasibility of the proposed method of fastening. Several years came and go before the possibility of carrying out this plan presented itself. But finally it came

Competent Examination

Mr. E. H. Geddes, manager of the E. H. Hardwick Company's granite quarries at Quincy, Mass. was engaged to be visiting relatives in Littleton, N. H., in August, 1916. He was also an acquaintance of the author's. The Profile matter was mentioned and the manager offered to make the examination, and that at his own expense. Accompanied by the writer, the head was reached, examined, and the proposed method of fastening approved and perfected. Careful measurements were also taken from which models were made of the slipping rock, showing the relative position of the ledge from which it had slipped, its bearings and angles of fracture, and the bearings, dimensions and angles of the ledge. The models were made by the author showing the number, shape and relative position of the fastening pins, forming rocks, and ledges. The slipping stone was also reproduced in a small model in which the slipping rock was given a lateral movement to fit in the ledge from which it had slipped, with a separate model showing the operation of a system of fastening with long steel pins and gas pipe, with cement and gravel filling and grouting, and the steel and gas pipe, would have exactly the same old movement in the breaking out of the rock, as it would in the Profile, and the author, by the simple but effective method of so anchoring this stone that it would be kept in a safe resting place, or in the elements for all time to come.



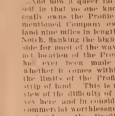
Fastening Rocks
Showing the method of fastening the rocks in place

Measurements Again Taken

In June following the examination in August 1916, the head was again visited and careful measurements again taken from the markings of 10 years before. A comparison of the two measurements showed that the southeast end of the upper forehead stone had moved, during the time one and one quarter inches, the lower end of the stone had moved three quarters of an inch while the extreme upper end had moved one-half inch. While this was not much in number of inches it was enough to cause the rock has but some four inches further to move before it will lose balance and fall to the valley from just below breaking off the chin in its descent and thus ruining the Profile forever

A Profitable Interview

Equipped with this reliable evidence of the immediately threatened doom of the Profile the writer interviewed the president of the Profile and Flume Hotels Company showing up the model and stating what the measurement as taken revealed as to the slipping of the forehead stone.



BEFORE DISCOVERY
Mr Geddes standing on the head stone
Notice the position of the forehead stone

This experience convinced the president of the company that he decided that something must be done and that speedily, to prevent so great a calamity, as the loss of the Profile would be, not only to the Profile House, and the Profit Hotels, but to New Hampshire, New England, America, and even to the entire world

Ownership of The Profile

And now a queer fact presents itself to that no one knows just who really owns the Profile. The above mentioned Company owns a strip of land nine miles in length through the Notch, flanking the highway on either side for most of the way. At the exact location of the Profile no survey has ever been made to ascertain whether it comes within or without the limits of the Profile Company's strip of land. This is not strange in view of the difficulty of making a survey here and in consideration of the commercial worthlessness of the land just where the Profile is formed. The land here is nothing but rock with no tree growth and with practically no soil at all, in fact the growth of the entire section of Mount Cannon is of no value whatever, being at the best not larger than dwarf spruces and not many of these.

It is manifest of these facts that it is not known who really owns the Profile. Perhaps this is well, for it leaves "The Old Man of the Mountain" as every true man should be — left to that human ownership, free to be enjoyed by all as an inspiration to every beholder

An Appeal to the Governor

Because of these facts as to ownership and also because of the importance to the State of New Hampshire of the Profile, the author of the Profile Company thought that the work of "Saving the Profile"

should be done by the State rather than by even the most interested Company. Accordingly arrangements were made by him for presenting this matter to Gov R H Spaulding and his council for their consideration and action, and the writer was asked to meet them at the State House in Concord for this purpose. In August 1916, he did so, showing the models and photographs, with the result that they decided to proceed with the work at State expense and with the president of the Profile and Flume Hotels Company in general charge of the work.

The "Operation" at Last Assured

Steps were at once taken to secure the fastening before the coming of cold weather. The gentleman in charge proceeded to perfect the arrangements for the "operation," working through the writer, who had the necessary data in mind. Arrangements were made with O V Hooker & Co., of St Johnsbury, Vt to manufacture the three sets of anchor irons, using the writer's measurements and the Geddes models in their construction. These were made of Bessemer steel, of two inches or more in diameter from three to six feet long, and weighing altogether 450 pounds. Mr William G Astle, superintendent of the Company, gave personal supervision to their manufacture and excellent fastenings resulted.

The "Surgeon" at Work

Arrangements were made with Mr E H Geddes, the aforementioned quarry manager from Quincy Mass, to go to the Profile and proceed with the task as "scenic surgeon." This he did late in September and early in October in the fall of 1916, completing the task in eight days' time including one day's help by Mr R E Marden of Whitefield, N H. During three of these days the weather was most terrific in that exposed place even this early in the fall, so cold in fact that Mr Geddes' fingers were frost bitten so severely as to require medical attention. The route from the top of the mountain down to the top of the head is especially difficult. It is steep and rough, trailless, and at times a dense cloud obscures all landmarks, making the retaining of one's sense of direction very difficult. At times during the work the cloud mist was so dense that one man could not see another 20 feet distant, while the rush of wind at times compelled the use of safety ropes about one's body. The combination of wind, cold, snow, ice, slippery surfaces and dangerous position, made the operation exceedingly difficult, and required much nerve on the part of Mr Geddes, the "surgeon."

The "surgeon" of this unique "operation" is a man of 40 years, small, wiry, full of nerve, absolutely fearless, a strictly temperate, Christian man. During his days here he usually rose at 5 A M, and after a

light breakfast, followed the trail up Mount Cannon, a steep and rugged climb of some 1900 feet, and covering a distance of one and three-quarters miles. This ascent he would make in about 45 minutes. From the top of the mountain he would go down some 800 feet to the top of the head, working there until about 4 P M when he would descend the mountain for supper and well-earned rest at the Lafayette Cottage at The Profile House, the latter house being closed at the time. It is a good day's work for a rugged man merely to make the trip to the head and return, as the trail is long, steep and rough, the last part of it being a scramble over rocks and ledges with about nothing to go by. But one woman is known to have made the trip to the head, a Miss Nellie I Emery, niece of Mr Geddes, and a most strenuous time she had of it.

Mr Geddes supplemented his "little morning trip" for eight successive days with drilling holes, inserting the Lewis-blocks, and fastening the anchoring irons in place. Although no staging of any kind was required, much of the work had to be done in dangerous positions, where a slight misstep would mean a fall of several hundred feet. Besides great care had to be taken to avoid starting the slipping rock, one end of which rests on a small shelving portion of ledge beneath, while the other end is suspended in air supported by the over-balancing weight of the profile-forming end. Not more than 40 percent of the under surface

of this stone rests on the ledge while the remaining 60 percent project, into space, where it has been slowly crowded out during the ages by frost and ice heavings. In fact, so nearly over-balanced is this great portion of the forehead, that it is estimated that two men with levers could have easily dislodged this 30-ton rock to the ruin of the Profile forever. During the work upon it the rock often trembled, and the wonder is that vandals have not before now pried off this stone, but fortunately, largely owing to the difficulty experienced in locating this stone, it has been spared such desecration.

One of the many difficulties in the way of this "operation" was that of getting the anchor irons and other material up to the head. The only feasible way was to have this carried up by men. From 30 to 40 pounds is a good load for such a trip, and even at big wages it was difficult to get men to make one trip a day. Drills, hammers, brimstone, Lewis-blocks, ropes, brimstone, paint, water and food were packed up, and a third of the way down the other side of the mountain to the Profile location. Mr. Geddes himself carrying not a little of this impedimenta in his morning trips.

Quality of the Granite

The slipping forehead rock is some four and a half feet wide, five feet thick, 19 feet and five inches long, and is estimated to weigh 30 tons. It, as well as the rest of the Profile,

is of granite which, while showing disintegration on the surface, is still firm and solid within. Pieces of rock taken from the drill holes and polished by Mr Geddes produced a beautiful mottled black and pink appearance similar to our Scotch granite. Small pieces thus prepared were sent to Gov Spaulding, to the proprietor of the Profile House and to the author. Others can be secured by writing Mr Geddes, at 21 Bedford Street, Quincy, Mass.

Detail of Fastening

This slipping rock was fastened to the ledge from which it has gradually slipped away by the means of Lewis-blocks and turn-buckles. Lewis-blocks are flat steel blocks, in this case 14 inches long, four inches wide at one end, three inches at the other end, one inch thick, and with a large eye in the narrower end. Three holes, each 10 inches deep, five inches wide at the inner end, and four inches wide at the outer end, were drilled into the back side of the slipping stone, and the same number into the front side of the ledge back of it. The Lewis-blocks were inserted in the holes and keyed in tightly with one inch square steel keys, thus giving a grip that cannot loosen nor slip. Heavy clevises were attached through these eyes, and these connected with those in the ledge by means of two inch steel rods, drawn tightly up by turn-buckles three and one-half inches in diameter and 16 inches long, screw-

ing on with right and left hand threads over the rod ends. Three of these anchors, varying in length from three feet nine inches to six feet three inches, were put in at an angle of about 45 degrees so as to hold the stone from slipping endwise as well as off bodily, the natural tendency owing to the angle of the supporting ledge beneath being to slip in these two directions at once. Thus in effect the stone is hung upon hinges, allowing for frost heavings, while firmly held against any possible outward movement. The Lewis-blocks were brimstoned in to keep out water, and the rods, etc well painted with asphalt to prevent rust.

How The Profile is Formed

The Profile is formed on a shoulder of Mount Cannon, which juts out abruptly into space, some 1200 feet above Profile Lake. It is a singular fact that this mountain should take its name from the lesser by far of its two attractions, the Cannon instead of the Profile. Even in these times of "preparedness," there is but little of importance in connection with this profile of a Cannon high up on the side of the mountain that bears its name, for here, as elsewhere, it is "the man behind the gun" that counts most. Efforts recently made by the author have resulted in the change of this name to that of "Profile Mountain," the change being made by the United States Geographic Board, on March

7, 1917, on recommendation of J. W Benedict, Forest Supervisor, of Gorham, N H.

The Profile is composed of five layers of granite ledge, one exactly above the other, the lateral distance being but 25 feet. Of these five layers one forms the chin, another the

Complete anchor iron, showing Lewis-blocks, clevises and turn-buckles

upper lip, a third the nose, while two layers make up the forehead, a part of the upper layer being the 30-ton rock that has been fastened back. It is all together just as it appears to be when viewed from the road or lake below.

It has often been stated that the nose, chin, or other parts of the head has been chained, or bolted, or ce-

mented in place, all of which is untrue, for until Mr Geddes completed his work no part of the Profile had ever in any way been secured. In height, careful measurements taken by the author, and later by Mr Geddes, show it to be 40 feet from the top of the forehead to the bottom of the chin. The present fastenings are entirly out of sight from any Profile seeing point of view. It is hoped that a bronze tablet may yet be placed on the back side of the fastened rock to record the fact of its securance by the State of New Hampshire and so guard against the supposition of fraud in generations to come.

In Conclusion

Various accounts were published in many newspapers at about the time of this "operation," the most of which were very misleading and incorrect. The New York Times and the Boston Herald however, in their issues of October 8, 1916 each had a very clear and correct account of this that is interesting and reliable.

It is of interest to note that as with other infants even this now famous "Old Man" has had a brain development, and that of long standing. It is evident that at birth the quantity of his "grey matter" was such that he had a badly retreating forehead, for then the stone now secured, was back snug against the ledge from which it has gradually slipped away during the ages, until now the northern, profile-forming

end, is two feet 10 inches, and the other end five feet five inches from where it was at birth. This slipping of the brain not softening has caused "The Old Man" to grow old beautifully, for it changed a retreating forehead into one of Websterian proportions.

In connection with this "How the Profile Was Saved" it is of interest to remember that the author of "The White Hills" declared that the immense egg-shaped boulder formerly in the Flume was suspended "in a grip out of which it will not slip for centuries." But on June, 19 1883, a cloudburst sent such a raging torrent down from Mount Flume and into the Flume, that this great rock was torn from its grip and has never since been seen. In view of the fate that overtook this natural curiosity it has seemed all the more important to save the Profile from any possible calamity that might overtake it.

And so New Hampshire's most famous "high brow" has been saved to posterity, and that at an expense so small to the State that it would look ridiculous in print in proportion to the value of the work accomplished, and also certainly most discouraging to the "grafter."

Recently through the interest of the honorary life president of the Dartmouth Outing Club, the author has been awarded a bronze medal, appropriately inscribed, in recognition of his services in securing the "saving the face" of "The Old Man of the Mountain." This is the first

and on September 5, 1906, the top of the head was reached, its hight measured, photographs taken, the precarious condition of the forehead stone again discovered, and that with deep concern for the future security of New Hampshire's greatest attraction.

AFTER "THE OPERATION"

Parts of two of the three anchor irons showing.

A little latter the matter was taken up with the proprietor of The Profile House, the former discovery and investigation reviewed, but left as before in spite of the expressed conviction that "it is only a question of time" before the Profile would fall to pieces.

Indians concerning the Profile, it would seem most unreasonable to think that they knew nothing about it, for in their prowlings they must have noticed it from the shore of Profile Lake, and that years before the first road was laid out through the Notch. To them it must have semed a personification of the Great Spirit and doubtless elicited their worshipful adoration.

The discovery of the Profile by white men is given the date of 1805, when it was discovered by accident as follows : Nathaniel Hall, then of Thornton, N. H., with others, was in the employ of Hon. Enock Colby, who had been engaged by the State to lay out a road from Woodstock, (then called Peeling,) to Franconia. Late one afternoon the party camped for the night at the southern end of the little lake at the foot of the mountain. In the morning Mr. Hall, who had gone out early with his gun to look for partridges for breakfast, happened to look up from a spot by the lake whence he beheld the most wonderful face he had he ever seen! So amazed was he that he forgot about the birds he was after, and hastened back to bring his companions to see and confirm the great discovery. So far as we know, it was in this accidental way that white men first viewed this amazing spectacle, which has since become the main attraction of the entire White Mountain region, and the most famous of all natural Profiles known to man. This account of this discovery of the Profile is vouched for

award ever made by the Club, but arrangements have been made whereby in the future any who render exceptional and uncompensated service in conserving the natural attractions of our State, may be similarly rewarded.

"Good Bye, Old Man"

The attitude of the sublime eastern gaze of "The Old Man of the Mountain" is such as to justify the question asked by Mrs. Laura H. Grey in the verse:—

"Is he waiting for the dawning
Of the Grand Eternal Day?
Is he watching for the morning
When these hills shall pass away?"

However this may be, we do believe that now the Profile will remain intact and inspiring as ever "till time shall be no more."

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